

WEST HAWAI'I FISHERIES COUNCIL

POBox 489 Kailua Kona HI 96745

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE WEST HAWAI'I FISHERIES COUNCIL

To effectively manage fishery activities to ensure sustainability; enhance near shore resources; develop and implement management plans for minimizing resource depletion and conflicts of use; per legislative mandate to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to provide for substantive involvement of the community in resource management decisions; and encourage scientific research and monitoring of the near shore resources and environment from Upolu Point to Ka Lae.

In 1998 the Hawai'i State legislature passed Act 306 which established the West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area (WHRFMA) under the Department of Land and natural Resources (DLNR) Divisions of Aquatic Resources (DAR); Boating and Ocean recreations (DOBOR) and Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE). The Act defined the West Hawai'i area to encompass the near shore waters from Upolu Point (North Kohala) to Ka Lae (Ka'u) a shoreline distance of approximately 147 miles.

The purpose of Act 306 is to “effectively manage fishery activities to ensure sustainability, enhance near shore resources and minimize conflicts of use in the WHRFMA”.

Act 306 specifically mandated that DAR shall:

- 1) Designate a minimum of 30% of the West Hawaii coastal water as Fish Replenishment Areas (FRAs) in which aquarium fish collection is prohibited. This has been done.
- 2) Establish a day-use mooring buoy system and designate some high-use areas where no anchoring is allowed. The mooring system is established and the correct Hawaii Place Names are being validated.
- 3) Establish a portion of the FRAs as Fish Reserves where no fishing of reef-dwelling fish is allowed. This is in the 2011 Chart of Work and a committee is continuing the work.
- 4) Designate areas where the use of gill nets as set nets shall be prohibited. This has been established and West Hawaii is the only place where gill nets are allowable if registered.
- 5) Conduct a review of the effectiveness of the WHRFMA every five years. Act 306 also required that management decisions within the WHRFMA be made with substantial community involvement via facilitated dialogs with resident and resource users. The five-year report has been published.

The work of the Council for 2011, designed at the Annual Strategic Planning retreat in December 2010, is:

- 1) Monitor the rule package amendments that have been submitted to DAR/DLNR and are now with the Hawaii State Attorney General's office which include a Species of Special Concern white list of 40 aquarium fish that can be collected; regulations that prohibit spearfishing with scuba and designate an area off Ka'ohē Beach that prohibits fish collecting in order to reduce user conflict.

- 2) Work with communities willing to designate “no take’ or kapu areas, a mandate of Act 306 (a WHFC Committee has been formed and is working on this);
- 3) Create an amendment for no night spear fishing throughout the entire West Hawai’i Regional Fishery Management Area;
- 4) Create an enforcement policy that allows, or even encourages, inspection of coolers ;
- 5) Continue the installation of mooring and complete the replacement of common names for mooring sites with the correct Hawaiian Place names – (two committees are working on this).

The WHFC consists of stakeholders of interested community groups as well as additional non-voting, ex-officio resource people. The voting members represent a broad spectrum of community interest, user groups and geographic locale which is constantly being updated by new members of the Council.

Local Resource Councils have been established to gather mana’o from outlying communities on issues under consideration by the WHFC as well as the communities’ own issues of concern and to communicate information from the WHFC to the community. It is intended that this ever-growing network will continue to enhance fisheries management in our coastal communities, who work to provide sustenance, pleasure and sport for their families today and for generations to come.

CONTACTS FOR THE WEST HAWAII FISHERIES COUNCIL ARE:

Chair: Glennon Gingo: 960-9348 freediving@earthlink.net

Administrator: Marni Herkes 987.2171 marnih@hawaiiantel.net

UH Sea Grant Extension Service Office: Sara Peck at 329.2861 peck@hawaii.edu

DAR Office, Honokohau Harbor: Laura Livnat at 327.6226 darofc@hawaiiantel.net

DAR Aquatic Biologist: Dr. William Walsh at 328.8041 darkona@hawaiiantel.net

the National Research Council has published the benefit of having community involvement and said that “public participation can help get the science right and get the right science. A lot of science has to be applied to a very local context and local knowledge is essential”.

THE WEST HAWAII FISHERIES COUNCIL NEEDS YOUR PARTICIPATION

YOUR OCEAN RESOURCES NEED YOUR SUPPORT